

The Four Questions

How to do 'The Work' by Byron Katie

Byron Katie writes: "Do you really want to know the truth?" Often you will have several negative judgments about one person (or a situation, event, or yourself). You may have held a point of view for a length of time and not stopped to question its validity or truthfulness. You can use four simple questions to realize not only the deeper truth about something, but learn how holding onto that perception impacts your personal freedom and well-being.

Take each judgment separately through the inquiry process. The Work is meditation. It's about awareness; it's not about trying to change your mind. Let the mind ask the questions, then contemplate. Take your time, go inside, and wait for the deeper answers to surface.

When you think of a person, situation, past or future event or a judgement about yourself that brings up distress, frustration or fear, ask yourself these four questions:

1. Is it true? (yes or no, if no, move to question 3)
2. Can you absolutely know that it's true? (yes or no)
3. How you react, what happens when you think that thought?
4. Who would you be without the thought?

Contemplating these four questions typically allows you to 'see through' your misperceptions, judgments and deceptive assumptions about a person or situation. Thoughts that include words like should, have to, never, always, everyone or nobody generally do not hold up to the Four Questions inquiry. You are able to release an idea or concept that may have been keeping you stuck in a certain way of seeing things, reacting and over reacting to someone or something or unable to see new solutions and opportunities.

